

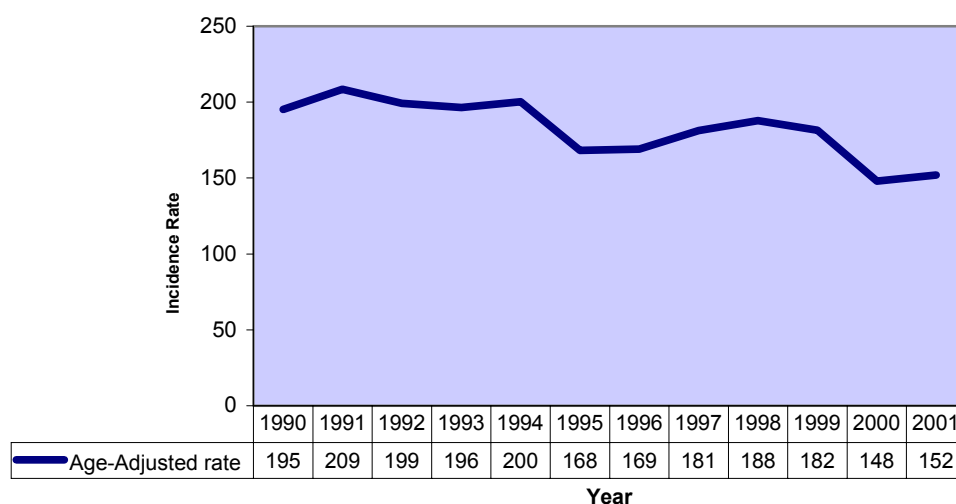
Prostate Cancer

The prostate is an important part of a man's urogenital system which is necessary for proper bladder control and normal sexual function. Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in US men. All men are at risk. The most common risk factor is age. More than 75 percent of men diagnosed with prostate cancer are over the age of 65. Initial screening tests for prostate cancer include a digital rectal examination (DRE), in which a doctor feels the prostate to check for abnormalities, and a blood test to detect the amount of prostate specific antigen (PSA) circulating in the blood.

Prostrate Cancer Incidence

Occurrence of prostate cancer in Lancaster County has declined since 1990 (Figure 18). The incidence rate for the last 12 years was similar to the incidence rate for the State and the Nation (Figure 19).

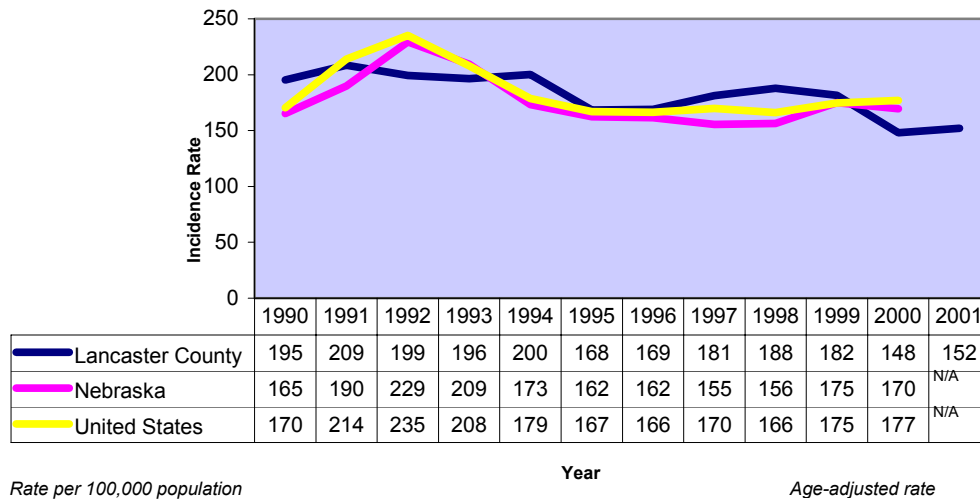
Figure 18: Prostate Cancer Incidence Rate
Lancaster County (1990-2001)



Rate per 100,000 population

Source: Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department

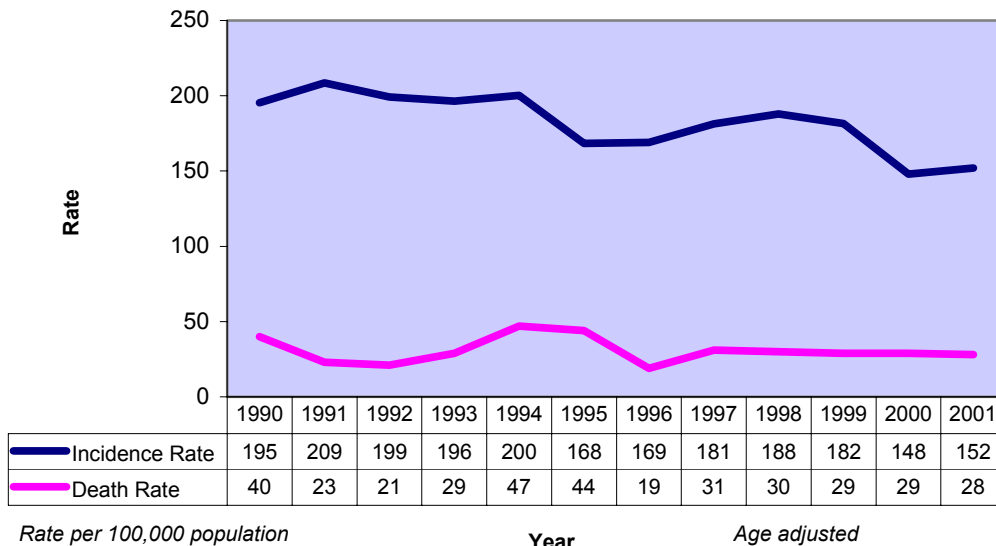
Figure 19: Prostate Cancer Incidence
Lancaster County, Nebraska & US (1990-2001)



Source: Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department

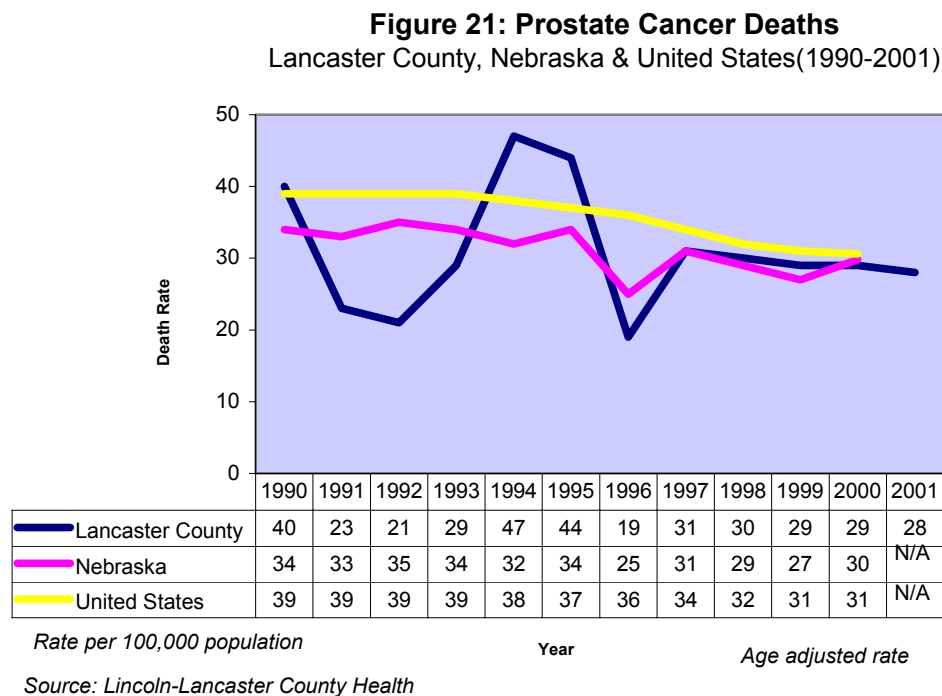
Similar to female breast cancer, death due to prostate cancer was relatively low in comparison to its high incidence rate. This is probably due to early detection and treatment of the disease (Figure 20). Despite a lower death rate than incidence rate, prostate cancer is still the second leading cause of cancer death among men.

Figure 20: Prostate Cancer Incidence & Death Rate
Lancaster County (1990-2001)



Source: Lincoln-Lancaster County Health

Figure 21 shows comparative deaths due to prostate cancer among the County, State and the Nation. Except for 1994 and 1995 death rates for Lancaster County and the State of Nebraska were lower than the US. The decrease in the death rate in the County was consistent with the downward trends for both the State and the Nation.



Public Health Implications:

The American Cancer Society recommends that the prostate specific antigen (PSA) test and digital rectal examinations be offered annually, beginning at age 50 to men who have a life expectancy of at least 10 years. African American men and men with a close relative with prostate cancer are at high risk and should begin testing at age 45. Information about the benefits and limitations of early detection and treatment of prostate cancer should be provided so that informed decisions can be made about testing. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) does not recommend routine screening for prostate cancer although it does support discussion of the pros and cons of screening and treatment with their health care provider as a basis for informed decision making about screening.

The public health focus continues to be directed to surveillance and monitoring of the incidence and mortality from prostate cancer, support to research efforts on screening effectiveness, and services and programs to increase community awareness and knowledge of this disease. Within Lincoln and Lancaster County, community presentations, distribution of educational brochures and media releases have promoted increased awareness of the need for men at risk to discuss prostate cancer with their physician